

Report To: Gypsy & Traveller Advisory Board

From: Louise Simpson
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Children, Families and Education

Date: 18 November 2010

Subject: The Minority Community Achievement Service – Gypsy Roma Traveller update

Summary: This report provides a brief, general update on the work of the Minority Community Achievement Service (MCAS).

FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

Significant recent developments/events include:

1. **Pupil Voice**

Using MCAS contacts and relationships in a secondary school in Maidstone, young Gypsy Travellers were consulted as part of the work to ensure that their voices were heard in response to the Kent Children and Young People's Plan. Colleagues worked in partnership with a Participation Worker to discuss leisure activities, education and culture. The group was keen that feedback was given to teachers. As a result of this consultation, young people designed a power-point presentation to show to school staff to raise awareness of the issues important to them. This was positively received by staff and parents were very supportive. This Focus Group will continue and develop within the school. There are currently discussions taking place on how the Group could engage in discussions with the Police. MCAS is also aware that a number of families, as is their right to do so, have opted for Elective Home Education. We are currently working to ensure that the voices of these children and young people are also heard.

2. **Moving Forward Together: Raising Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Achievement**

Following completion of the initial stages of the DfE Gypsy Roma and Traveller Achievement Project that Kent took part in; a national resource has been produced incorporating the good practice identified. This is being used as a tool to capacity build further in Kent schools.

3. **GRT History Month**

Four children from High Halden Primary School won prizes in the Gypsy, Roma Traveller Poetry Competition. There were over 1000 entries from across the country so this is a great achievement. The children have been invited to a ceremony in Lewes, East Sussex on November 11th to receive their awards.

MCAS continued to collaborate with libraries and schools to facilitate activities such as storytelling in schools and libraries and producing cultural displays. In Thanet at the Harbour Arm Gallery there was also a display of Roma Women self-portraits.

4. School Developments

Good news stories continue with examples of young people progressing to Grammar Schools and Further and Higher education. There is also community representation on Governing Bodies.

5. Recommendation

GTAB is recommended to receive this report.

Louise Simpson
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